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Rago & Goni

The Tree Dweller Children

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NEW YORK

CHICAGO





RAGO *and* GONI

THE TREE-DWELLER CHILDREN

BY

BELLE WILEY

SUPERVISOR OF METHODS IN ENGLISH, CITY NORMAL SCHOOL, ROCHESTER, N. Y.;
AUTHOR OF "THE CHILDREN OF THE CLIFF," "LODREX, THE
LITTLE LAKE DWELLER," "MEWANKE, THE
LITTLE INDIAN BOY," "THE MOTHER
GOOSE PRIMER"



D. APPLETON AND COMPANY
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CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I.—THE COUNTRY	I
II.—THE RACE	II
III.—THEIR FOOD	20
IV.—THE ANIMALS	28
V.—THE HUNT	37
VI.—THE CLAN	47
VII.—THE FIRE.	54
VIII.—THE SHELTER	65
IX.—THE ATTACK	77
X.—THE RETURN	88

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30	31	32	33	34	35	36	37	38	39	40	41	42	43	44	45	46	47	48	49	50	51	52	53	54	55	56	57	58	59	60	61	62	63	64	65	66	67	68	69	70	71	72	73	74	75	76	77	78	79	80	81	82	83	84	85	86	87	88	89	90	91	92	93	94	95	96	97	98	99	100	101	102	103	104	105	106	107	108	109	110	111	112	113	114	115	116	117	118	119	120	121	122	123	124	125	126	127	128	129	130	131	132	133	134	135	136	137	138	139	140	141	142	143	144	145	146	147	148	149	150	151	152	153	154	155	156	157	158	159	160	161	162	163	164	165	166	167	168	169	170	171	172	173	174	175	176	177	178	179	180	181	182	183	184	185	186	187	188	189	190	191	192	193	194	195	196	197	198	199	200	201	202	203	204	205	206	207	208	209	210	211	212	213	214	215	216	217	218	219	220	221	222	223	224	225	226	227	228	229	230	231	232	233	234	235	236	237	238	239	240	241	242	243	244	245	246	247	248	249	250	251	252	253	254	255	256	257	258	259	260	261	262	263	264	265	266	267	268	269	270	271	272	273	274	275	276	277	278	279	280	281	282	283	284	285	286	287	288	289	290	291	292	293	294	295	296	297	298	299	300	301	302	303	304	305	306	307	308	309	310	311	312	313	314	315	316	317	318	319	320	321	322	323	324	325	326	327	328	329	330	331	332	333	334	335	336	337	338	339	340	341	342	343	344	345	346	347	348	349	350	351	352	353	354	355	356	357	358	359	360	361	362	363	364	365	366	367	368	369	370	371	372	373	374	375	376	377	378	379	380	381	382	383	384	385	386	387	388	389	390	391	392	393	394	395	396	397	398	399	400	401	402	403	404	405	406	407	408	409	410	411	412	413	414	415	416	417	418	419	420	421	422	423	424	425	426	427	428	429	430	431	432	433	434	435	436	437	438	439	440	441	442	443	444	445	446	447	448	449	450	451	452	453	454	455	456	457	458	459	460	461	462	463	464	465	466	467	468	469	470	471	472	473	474	475	476	477	478	479	480	481	482	483	484	485	486	487	488	489	490	491	492	493	494	495	496	497	498	499	500	501	502	503	504	505	506	507	508	509	510	511	512	513	514	515	516	517	518	519	520	521	522	523	524	525	526	527	528	529	530	531	532	533	534	535	536	537	538	539	540	541	542	543	544	545	546	547	548	549	550	551	552	553	554	555	556	557	558	559	560	561	562	563	564	565	566	567	568	569	570	571	572	573	574	575	576	577	578	579	580	581	582	583	584	585	586	587	588	589	590	591	592	593	594	595	596	597	598	599	600	601	602	603	604	605	606	607	608	609	610	611	612	613	614	615	616	617	618	619	620	621	622	623	624	625	626	627	628	629	630	631	632	633	634	635	636	637	638	639	640	641	642	643	644	645	646	647	648	649	650	651	652	653	654	655	656	657	658	659	660	661	662	663	664	665	666	667	668	669	670	671	672	673	674	675	676	677	678	679	680	681	682	683	684	685	686	687	688	689	690	691	692	693	694	695	696	697	698	699	700	701	702	703	704	705	706	707	708	709	710	711	712	713	714	715	716	717	718	719	720	721	722	723	724	725	726	727	728	729	730	731	732	733	734	735	736	737	738	739	740	741	742	743	744	745	746	747	748	749	750	751	752	753	754	755	756	757	758	759	760	761	762	763	764	765	766	767	768	769	770	771	772	773	774	775	776	777	778	779	780	781	782	783	784	785	786	787	788	789	790	791	792	793	794	795	796	797	798	799	800	801	802	803	804	805	806	807	808	809	810	811	812	813	814	815	816	817	818	819	820	821	822	823	824	825	826	827	828	829	830	831	832	833	834	835	836	837	838	839	840	841	842	843	844	845	846	847	848	849	850	851	852	853	854	855	856	857	858	859	860	861	862	863	864	865	866	867	868	869	870	871	872	873	874	875	876	877	878	879	880	881	882	883	884	885	886	887	888	889	890	891	892	893	894	895	896	897	898	899	900	901	902	903	904	905	906	907	908	909	910	911	912	913	914	915	916	917	918	919	920	921	922	923	924	925	926	927	928	929	930	931	932	933	934	935	936	937	938	939	940	941	942	943	944	945	946	947	948	949	950	951	952	953	954	955	956	957	958	959	960	961	962	963	964	965	966	967	968	969	970	971	972	973	974	975	976	977	978	979	980	981	982	983	984	985	986	987	988	989	990	991	992	993	994	995	996	997	998	999	1000	1001	1002	1003	1004	1005	1006	1007	1008	1009	1010	1011	1012	1013	1014	1015	1016	1017	1018	1019	1020	1021	1022	1023	1024	1025	1026	1027	1028	1029	1030	1031	1032	1033	1034	1035	1036	1037	1038	1039	1040	1041	1042	1043	1044	1045	1046	1047	1048	1049	1050	1051	1052	1053	1054	1055	1056	1057	1058	1059	1060	1061	1062	1063	1064	1065	1066	1067	1068	1069	1070	1071	1072	1073	1074	1075	1076	1077	1078	1079	1080	1081	1082	1083	1084	1085	1086	1087	1088	1089	1090	1091	1092	1093	1094	1095	1096	1097	1098	1099	1100	1101	1102	1103	1104	1105	1106	1107	1108	1109	1110	1111	1112	1113	1114	1115	1116	1117	1118	1119	1120	1121	1122	1123	1124	1125	1126	1127	1128	1129	1130	1131	1132	1133	1134	1135	1136	1137	1138	1139	1140	1141	1142	1143	1144	1145	1146	1147	1148	1149	1150	1151	1152	1153	1154	1155	1156	1157	1158	1159	1160	1161	1162	1163	1164	1165	1166	1167	1168	1169	1170	1171	1172	1173	1174	1175	1176	1177	1178	1179	1180	1181	1182	1183	1184	1185	1186	1187	1188	1189	1190	1191	1192	1193	1194	1195	1196	1197	1198	1199	1200	1201	1202	1203	1204	1205	1206	1207	1208	1209	1210	1211	1212	1213	1214	1215	1216	1217	1218	1219	1220	1221	1222	1223	1224	1225	1226	1227	1228	1229	1230	1231	1232	1233	1234	1235	1236	1237	1238	1239	1240	1241	1242	1243	1244	1245	1246	1247	1248	1249	1250	1251	1252	1253	1254	1255	1256	1257	1258	1259	1260	1261	1262	1263	1264	1265	1266	1267	1268	1269	1270	1271	1272	1273	1274	1275	1276	1277	1278	1279	1280	1281	1282	1283	1284	1285	1286	1287	1288	1289	1290	1291	1292	1293	1294	1295	1296	1297	1298	1299	1300	1301	1302	1303	1304	1305	1306	1307	1308	1309	1310	1311	1312	1313	1314	1315	1316	1317	1318	1319	1320	1321	1322	1323	1324	1325	1326	1327	1328	1329	1330	1331	1332	1333	1334	1335	1336	1337	1338	1339	1340	1341	1342	1343	1344	1345	1346	1347	1348	1349	1350	1351	1352	1353	1354	1355	1356	1357	1358	1359	1360	1361	1362	1363	1364	1365	1366	1367	1368	1369	1370	1371	1372	1373	1374	1375	1376	1377	1378	1379	1380	1381	1382	1383	1384	1385	1386	1387	1388	1389	1390	1391	1392	1393	1394	1395	1396	1397	1398	1399	1400	1401	1402	1403	1404	1405	1406	1407	1408	1409	1410	1411	1412	1413	1414	1415	1416	1417	1418	1419	1420	1421	1422	1423	1424	1425	1426	1427	1428	1429	1430	1431	1432	1433	1434	1435	1436	1437	1438	1439	1440	1441	1442	1443	1444	1445	1446	1447	1448	1449	1450	1451	1452	1453	1454	1455	1456	1457	1458	1459	1460	1461	1462	1463	1464	1465	1466	1467	1468	1469	1470	1471	1472	1473	1474	1475	1476	1477	1478	1479	1480	1481	1482	1483	1484	1485	1486	1487	1488	1489	1490	1491	1492	1493	1494	1495	14
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CHAPTER I

THE TREE-DWELLER CHILDREN

Rago and Goni were brother and sister.

They lived a long time ago in a country far, far away.

They were the first little boy and girl that we know anything about.

Rago and Goni lived among the tall trees on the wooded hill near the river.

They lived with their mother and baby sister.

Rago was twelve years old and Goni was seven.

Baby sister was much younger.



She was too little to take care of herself.

Mother always carried her little girl with her.

Of course she could not carry her baby in her arms, for she needed her hands for other things.

Sometimes the baby clung to a strong vine which her mother tied around her waist.

Sometimes she just held fast to

her mother's waist or clung to her neck.

One morning very early Rago awakened with a start.

He sat up and listened.

He had been fast asleep in the branches of the strong oak tree.

Rago and Goni always slept in trees.

Really the trees were the only home Rago and Goni knew.

That night their mother had



selected beds in the oak trees, because the strong branches were woven together with vines.



These vines made good strong beds for the children.

Sometimes when there were no vines, the Tree-dwellers wove the

slender branches of the tall trees together.

This also made a strong bed to lie upon.

Very often the older Tree dwellers would just stretch themselves on a strong branch for the night.

They would tie themselves to the branch to keep from falling.

Rago had been sleeping so soundly that he had to rub his eyes to make himself wake up.

Then he looked down toward the foot of the tree.

There stood two huge panthers.

Rago was afraid, for he knew that the panthers could climb trees quickly and easily.

“What shall I do, what shall I do?” he thought.

He was almost afraid to move



for fear the panthers would rush right up the tree.

Just then he heard his mother call softly from a nearby tree.

She too had seen the panthers.

She had already picked up her baby and put her upon her back.

The baby clung fast to her mother's neck. She was frightened, for she had been awakened from a sound sleep.

Goni was still fast asleep, she had not heard the fierce cry of the panthers.

"Waken your sister, Rago," called his mother, "she is fast asleep."

"All right, mother," he answered softly.

Rago sprang lightly from one

branch to the other until he reached the oak tree in which Goni slept.

He had to be very quiet so the



panthers would not hear him.

Not a sound did he make so lightly did he go, and soon he

reached the tree in which Goni slept.

"Wake up, Goni, wake up, Goni," whispered Rago. "The panthers are at the foot of these trees."

Goni sat up and began to cry. She was very frightened. "Hush, hush, sister," whispered Rago, "the panthers will hear you. Come, we must go to another part of the forest."

"Where is mother?" cried Goni.

"She is coming with baby sister," whispered Rago. "Hurry, spring lightly, so the panthers will not hear you."

Rago and Goni did not stop to dress, for they wore no clothing.

Very nimbly they sprang from branch to branch and soon they reached another part of the forest.

Their mother followed them with baby sister upon her back.

Soon they stopped to rest and listen.

The panthers had not heard them go, so softly did they move.

They were afraid the panthers might follow them, but when they stopped to look they were not in sight.

How glad they were to be safe!

"The panthers were very near us that time," said Rago.

"It is well we heard them before they reached us," said mother.

CHAPTER II

THE RACE

“Help me weave the slender branches of this cedar tree together, Rago,” said his mother. “Then I can put baby upon them and we can find something to eat for breakfast.”

“Yes, I am very hungry and thirsty,” said Goni.

So Rago and his mother worked quickly and soon had a fine strong bed woven.

Then mother laid baby sister upon it.

"Let us look to see that there are no tigers nor lions below," said their mother. "It would not be safe to climb down if there were."

They looked carefully in all directions.

"See!" said Goni, "there are some wild horses, eating on the grassy plain beyond the forest."

"See that huge cave bear just going into his cave," cried Rago.

"He certainly does look fierce," said Goni.

"I suppose he will sleep all day," said Rago.

"Let us climb down," said Goni.

“Come,” said Rago, “I am ready.”



“Do not go far, children,” said their mother, “for it is still very

early and there are wild beasts about."



"I must stay near by, to watch baby sister."

"All right, mother," said the children as they climbed down the tree.

"Let us go to the river for a drink of cool water," said Goni.

"Come along," said Rago, "but be careful and look sharply."

So the brother and sister ran along very swiftly toward the river.

Suddenly they stopped. "I hear sounds," whispered Rago.

"Listen, Goni! Where do the sounds come from?"

"They seem to come from the thicket close by."

"Quickly, Goni, climb this tree!"

"See that pack of hyenas! They are stealing down to their cave."

“How their cowardly eyes gleam!”

“It is well you heard them in the thicket, Rago,” said Goni.



“I wonder if my ears and eyes will ever be as sharp as yours, so that I may know when the wild beasts are near?” said Goni.

"Oh, yes," said Rago, "when you are a little older you will hear sounds just as I do, Goni."

"Let us run a race to the river in the trees," said Rago.

"Ready, go!" and the brother and sister swung lightly from branch to branch until they reached the river.

"Hurry, Goni, hurry or I shall get there first," called Rago.

"I'm coming, Rago," answered Goni.

"I will wait for you, Goni," called Rago as he reached the river first.

They waited and listened a moment in the trees, then they

dropped lightly to the ground and ran to the water's edge.



Quickly they dipped up the wa-

ter with their hands and drank all they wanted.

“Now let us go back to mother and baby sister,” said Goni.

“We can gather some nuts and berries on the way,” said Rago.

“Let us take the trail back.”

So the brother and sister started back. They listened and looked as they ran.

CHAPTER III

THEIR FOOD

On their way back Rago and Goni stopped to eat berries and roots for their breakfast.

They were hungry, so they ate heartily.

"See! here are some acorns, Goni," called Rago. "Would you like some of these to eat?"

"Yes, yes," answered Goni, and she ran to where Rago was standing.

The children cracked the acorns

with their strong, sharp teeth, and ate the kernels quickly.

“Let us carry some nuts back to mother,” said Goni.



“She can not go far from baby sister.”

"Yes," said Rago, "and here are some blueberries which mother will like."

"How shall we carry them?" asked Goni.

"If I had a rabbit's skin we might carry the acorns in that," said Rago.

"Rabbits' skins make fine baskets."

"You carry these branches with the berries on them, Goni, and I will carry the nuts in my hands," said Rago.

"If we should have to climb a tree suddenly, we can drop the nuts and berries."

"Now let us hurry back, or

mother will wonder if we are safe," said Rago.

As they neared the place where



their mother was, they shouted,
"Mother! Mother!"

"Here I am," answered their

24 RAGI AND GINI
mother, who was sitting on a
branch in a tall tree.



“Baby and I have been waiting
for you.”

By this time baby sister was
wide awake and her mother was

singing to her as she held her in her arms.

“Here, mother,” said the children, “here are some berries and acorns for you.”

Rago had to climb the tree to hand the nuts and berries to his mother.

He had to climb with one hand, his other hand was full of nuts and he carried the branches under his arm.

“Thank you, children,” said their mother, “I am glad to have the berries and nuts, for I have had no breakfast.”

Baby sister smiled too, for she wanted breakfast also.

“Here are some nuts I cannot crack,” said their mother. “Will you crack them for me?”



“Yes,” said Rago and he tried to crack the nuts with his teeth.

“I shall have to try a stone,”

said Rago, "for I cannot crack them with my teeth."

He climbed down the tree and soon found a stone. The rough edges hurt his hands, so he wound one end with grass.

This made a fine hammer and the nuts were soon cracked.

"Here, mother, are the nuts," called Rago. "Are you coming down?"

"Yes," answered his mother as she sprang nimbly from the tree. "Thank you, Rago, that is a fine way to crack nuts when our teeth cannot crack them. Now I shall take baby sister to the river for a drink."

CHAPTER IV

THE ANIMALS

While their mother went to the river to get baby sister a drink of water, the brother and sister played among the trees.

As they ran to and fro they stopped to listen to the call of the birds and to watch the squirrels as they frisked about.

"What is that, Rago?" said Goni, pointing to something very near.

"They are wild hogs," said Rago.

“See how the young ones gather close to their mother.”



“They are afraid to leave her.”

“Their mother is digging into the earth among the roots of the

tree. She is looking for food for her children," said Rago.

"I wonder what those black things are that they are digging for," said Goni.

"Shall we see?" asked Rago, as he picked up his club and threw it toward the wild hogs.

This frightened them and they dashed away, the young pigs following their mother to the underbrush not far away.

When they had gone, Rago and Goni ran to the place where the mother hog had been digging.

"See!" said Rago, "they were digging for truffles. Here is one, Goni, eat it."

Goni bit into the rough black truffle with her sharp teeth.

It was white inside. "I like it," said Goni, as she ate the truffle.

"I have never eaten a truffle before."

"Look, Goni!" cried Rago, "I think there must be a bee's nest in that hollow stump."

"I should like some honey," said Rago.

"But the bees might sting you," said Goni.

"I won't mind a bee's sting," answered Rago.

So Rago went toward the hollow stump. He looked in. It was filled with sweet wild honey.

Rago put in his hand and filled it with the honey.



The bees didn't like their nest being robbed.

They buzzed about Rago and

stung him badly, but he didn't care because he was used to being hurt.

"Goni, come and eat some honey," called Rago.

"No, no, Rago, I am afraid of the bees."

"Then stay where you are and I will bring you some," called Rago.

So Rago filled his hand again with honey and ran with it to Goni.

"Thank you, Rago," said Goni, "I wish I were as brave as you are."

"Some day you will be," said Rago. "You are not as old as I am, Goni."

"Come, let us go back."

Rago picked up his club, because he felt safer when he carried it.

The brother and sister started back.

As they ran along they shouted, "Mother, we are coming."

Suddenly they stopped. "Hush!" said Rago, as a little rabbit scampered across their path.

"I shall catch that rabbit for dinner."

"Let us be very quiet, Goni, and it will come back."

"Come, crouch down so that the rabbit will think we are logs."

"Now watch," whispered Rago.

Soon the little rabbit scamp-
ered out of its hiding place.



Rago crept up quietly behind
it.

Then he raised his club and with
one sharp blow the little rabbit
was dead.

“See, Goni!” said Rago, holding up the rabbit, “won’t we have a fine dinner! ”

CHAPTER V

THE HUNT

“See, mother, what a fine rabbit I have caught,” cried Rago as he ran up to his mother.

Rago sat down on the ground and began to skin the little rabbit with his sharp stone knife.



He had made this knife himself from a smooth pebble by clipping off flakes from one end, until it had a sharp point.

He left one end smooth so that it would not hurt his hand.

Then he had a splendid sharp knife which he could use for many things.



When he had skinned the rabbit he laid the skin on the ground

to dry.

Then the sister and brother ate

the rabbit's flesh, which Rago cut into strips.

"This is good," said Goni, as she ate the raw flesh.

Rago cracked the bones with his stone hammer and sucked the marrow from them.

"Here is a fine bone for you, Goni," said Rago. "You can crack it with your teeth."

Suddenly Rago jumped to his feet. "What do I hear?" he said.

"Come, get into this fir tree quickly."

They were just in time, for a huge rhinoceros came to the very spot where the children had been sitting.

He went along slowly.



"I am glad we aren't down there," said Rago.

"The beast would have crushed us if we had been sitting there."

"I am sure he can't see us up here," said their mother, "for the rhinoceros cannot see very far away."

"Is he a very fierce creature?" asked Goni.

"Yes, indeed," answered Rago.

"No animal likes to meet the rhinoceros, he is so fierce and huge.

"He uses his tusked snout to strike with.

"Even the mammoth and fierce sabretooth fear him.

"He must be very angry at something.

“Watch him tear down that tall cedar tree.

“You can hear him grind the wood with his strong teeth.



“I wonder what he is so angry about.”

As they were watching the huge creature, they saw a man running in the distance.

He was running toward the spot where the huge rhinoceros stood.

The man had a torch in his hand, and waved it as he ran.



Back of him were other men all running toward the rhinoceros.

They all carried burning torches.

"Who are these strange men?" asked Rago. "They are following the rhinoceros."

"I guess that is why he is so angry."

"They are the Tree-dwellers who belong to the clan that lives some distance away."

"Why does the leader wear skins over his shoulder?" asked Goni.

"This shows that he is very brave," answered their mother, "because he must first kill the wild animals, before he can wear their skins."

"See, he has feathers in his hair and a necklace about his neck."

“Yes,” said their mother, “this necklace is made from the teeth of wild beasts.

“These Tree-dwellers wear teeth strung on sinews about their necks, and arms and ankles.

“This shows that they have killed many wild beasts, and they are very proud to wear their teeth.

“The more necklaces and feathers and skins they have the braver they are.”

“See how near the leader goes to the rhinoceros,” shouted Rago.

“All of the other men are following him, waving their firebrands.”

“They are driving him toward

the steep cliff. Now he has almost reached the edge," cried Rago.

"He will surely fall."

Just then the huge rhinoceros lost his footing and fell over the steep cliff.

Then the leader with some of the men climbed down the cliff.

They knew that the beast was dead, and they wished to take back trophies to show their clan how brave they had been.

"Our people will praise us," said the leader, "when we take these trophies back with us."

CHAPTER VI

THE CLAN

“Mother, why can’t we live with those Tree-dwellers?” asked Rago.

“Let us go down and wait for the men. Maybe they will take us with them.”

“I think they would,” answered their mother, “they are always ready to make their clan larger.”

So they got down from the trees and squatted upon the ground.

As they sat there, they watched a herd of wild cattle coming slowly along.

They were wandering toward the river for a drink of cool water.

"See, they have a leader," said Goni.

"Yes," said Rago, "cattle always follow their leader."

"They will have to watch out for the wolves and bears."

"The other day I saw a pack of wolves rush upon a herd of cattle," said Rago.

"They seized three young cattle and killed them."

"Wolves are always ready for a feast," said their mother.

"I think I hear the men coming back," said Rago.

“They are going back by the trail. Let us call to them. They will hear us.”



So Rago shouted very loudly.
He shouted again and again.

The leader of the men heard the call.

“I hear someone calling,” he

said. "Let us go into the forest and see who it is."

So all of the men went into the forest and soon came upon Rago and Goni, who were sitting on the ground, with their mother and baby sister.

"Did you call?" asked the leader.

"Yes," answered their mother.

"Will you take us with you?"

"We should like to join your clan."

"Yes," said the leader, "we shall be glad to have you."

"Shall we have someone to play with?" asked Rago.

"Yes, there are many boys and

girls in our clan," answered the leader.

"You are very brave," said Rago. "I watched you drive the huge rhinoceros to the edge of the cliff.

"I should like to be as brave as you are when I am a man."

"We will teach you how to be brave," said the leader.

"Come, let us start as it is getting late."

So they all started off together.

Rago and Goni weren't a bit afraid because they were with these brave men.

"What is that?" asked Rago, pointing to the firebrand.

“This is a fire-torch,” said the leader; “when we carry these we need not be afraid.

“Fire protects us from the wild beast.”

“And where do you get fire?” asked Rago.

“Not so very long ago we had a terrible storm in our forest. It thundered and lightened.

“The lightning set fire to the trees in the forest.

“At first we Tree - dwellers thought that the fire was a terrible monster. We were frightened and ran away from it.

“Then we learned that the fire would not harm us and that if we

fed it wood, it would burn on forever.

“When we have fire there is no need for swinging from tree to tree, for we are safe on the ground.”

“Do the wild beasts fear the firebrands?” asked Rago.

“Yes,” answered the leader.

“May I use a firebrand?” asked Rago.

“Yes,” answered the leader.

“You may light your own firebrand, and you may help us feed the fire also.”

“I am glad we are going to live with you,” said Rago.

“We shall be glad to have you,” said the leader.

CHAPTER VII

THE FIRE

‘I am tired and hungry,’ said Goni.

“All right,” said the leader, “let us look for food.

“There are plenty of roots and nuts around here.”

“Here are some acorns, Goni; eat them.”

Rago found his own food as did all of the men.

After they had eaten all they wished they started off again.

"The trees might be safer," said the leader, "for our torches have gone out and it is getting late."

"I can already hear the growls of the cave bear."

"They have been asleep all day and are looking for a feast."

"All for the trees!" shouted the leader.

So they all climbed the trees and nimbly swung from branch to branch.

"That largest horse is leading the herd up the trail."

"I wonder if there are any wild beasts lying in wait for them!"

"Where do the horses go at night?" asked Goni.



“To the grassy plain outside the forest,” answered the leader.

“They have to eat the green grass which they find there.”



“Here we are,” said the leader, as all of the men suddenly jumped to the ground.

There were many Tree-dwellers squatting around the fire.

One strong Tree-dweller woman was feeding the fire with huge cedar logs.

Some of the young boys were playing that a cave bear had come suddenly upon them.

They had make-believe torches with which they were pretending to frighten the fierce bear.

They all stopped and looked at Rago and Goni and their mother, who had baby sister in her arms.

Baby sister began to cry when she saw so many people.

Goni clutched Rago's arm.

"I am afraid, Rago," said Goni.

Rago was frightened also. He didn't go very near the fire.

"You need not be afraid," said the leader. "The fire is our friend. It will not hurt you."



The children ran toward Rago and Goni and pushed them toward the fire.

"It will not hurt you," they cried.

"It will keep you warm, and protect you from the wild beasts.

"See, here is some roasted squirrel's meat which you may have.

"Taste it and see how good it is."

Rago had never eaten roasted meat before.

"It is good," said Rago. "I have never eaten roasted meat before."



"How did you learn that meat could be roasted?"

"One day, Strong-arm, the

leader of our clan, threw down a squirrel near the fire. It was so near that the fire scorched it.

"When Strong-arm ate the squirrel's meat it tasted so good that he told the other people in the clan about it.

"Since then we often roast our meat because we like it better than raw meat."

"Do you like roasted meat, mother?" asked Rago.

"Here is a piece of meat for you, baby sister," said Goni.

"Come, sit down with us," said the children.

"Strong-arm has something to show us."

Strong-arm was sitting near the fire with the other Tree-dwellers about him.

He was telling them all about the hunt that day.

He told them how the huge rhinoceros had fallen over the cliff.

He showed them the tusks, and teeth and claws.

The Tree-dwellers were all very much pleased, and they praised the men for their bravery.

When he had finished talking, Strong-arm jumped up.

"Let us all play the hunt of today," he said.

"You be the leader, Strong-arm," they shouted.

"All right," said Strong-arm;
"let us pretend that the huge



rhinoceros is here and we will
show you just what we did."

So the men played the hunt.

They acted just as if it were real.

"This is our hunting dance,"
said one of the children to Rago.

"We have a hunting dance every
night after the men return from
the hunt.

"These make us brave and teach
us how to hunt together.

"They teach all of the people
how to do their part.

"Some day we shall be brave
enough to take part in a real
hunt."

"I hope to be brave enough to
be a leader," said Rago.

"Yes," said the other child, "I
do too."

CHAPTER VIII

THE SHELTER

It was growing late and the Tree-dwellers were tired.

So they stretched themselves about the fire to sleep.

"I shall watch the fire tonight," said one of the women.

"Why must someone watch the fire?" asked Rago.

"We must not let it go out," answered Strong-arm, "for if we did we would have no fire."

"I do not wish to sleep on the

ground," said Goni. "I am afraid."

"You may sleep in the trees if you wish," said Strong-arm.

"Where will you sleep, Rago?" asked Strong-arm.

"I shall sleep on the ground," answered Rago. "I am not afraid."

So their mother found a bed in the evergreen trees for Goni and baby sister.

She, too, stretched herself on a limb and tied herself tightly to it so she would not fall.

There she could watch baby sister and Goni.

She could look down on the

Tree-dwellers as they slept on the ground.



The trees sheltered them from the wind and rain.

So they slept through the long night.

All night long the woman Tree-dweller fed the fire. She did not sleep for fear the fire would go out.

In the early morning the Tree-dwellers awoke.

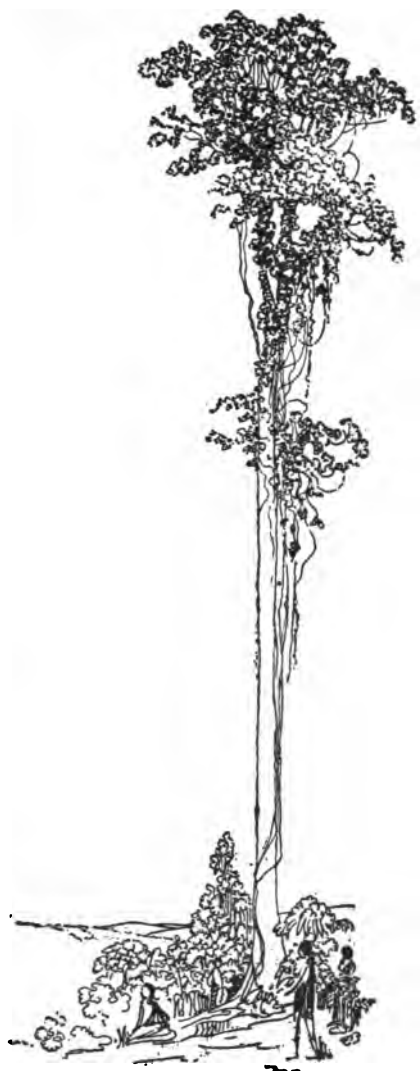
Each one left the fireplace to go in search of food.

The mothers carried their babies with them, and did not go far away from the fire.

The men went into the forest.

They left a woman in charge of the fire.

When Goni and baby sister awoke, Rago had already eaten



his breakfast of berries and roots, which he found near by.

He stood watching some women who were working among the evergreen trees.

He wondered what they were doing, as he watched them break off the evergreen branches.

"Shall I help you carry them?" asked Rago.

"Thank you," said the woman. "You may carry the branches to those young trees near the fire. We shall follow you."

Rago wondered what the women would do with the branches.

They soon came carrying armfuls of them.

Rago watched them bend down the tops of the young trees and tie them together.



They wove the evergreens among them and piled larger branches against the young trees to strengthen them.

“What are you making?” asked Rago.

“A shelter for our children, which will protect them from the cold and rain.

“Now that it is cold and the trees have lost their leaves we need shelter for our children.”

“Do not these evergreen trees protect you from the rain and snow?” asked Rago.

“Not always,” answered the woman.

“We have carried our fire to the evergreen trees, because they are the only trees which will protect us in the winter.

“But the needles of the ever-

green trees do not protect us so well as the leaves of the birch and oak trees."

"I have never seen a shelter before," said Rago.

"No," said the woman, "this is the first house which the Tree-dwellers have made."

Rago went to the fire. The Tree-dweller woman was piling cedar logs upon it.

"Where are all of the men?" asked Rago.

"They have gone into the forest to hunt," answered the woman.

"Come, Rago," called one of the boys, "let us go into the forest too."

“What is your name?” asked Rago of the boy.

“My name is Long-head,” said the boy.



“How old are you, Long-head?” asked Rago.

“I am fourteen years old,” answered Long-head.

"I am twelve," said Rago.

"Come along," said Long-head,
"here is a firebrand for you."

Rago felt very big with the firebrand in his hand.



He wasn't afraid to carry it.

Now he would not have to swing from branch to branch, but could walk upon the ground. He

would be safe while he carried the torch.

The two boys wandered into the forest.

At first they followed the trail, then they left the trail and went into the denser part of the forest.

Long-head walked faster than Rago and soon got ahead.

Rago did not hurry, for he had many strange things to look at.

He was used to traveling in the trees, for he had never before had a torch to protect him.

He felt very brave and safe as he walked along.

CHAPTER IX

THE ATTACK

Suddenly he stopped, for he heard a loud call.

"Help! help!" came from the distance.

"I'm coming," shouted Rago, "I'm coming," and he ran in the direction of the call.

"Help! help!" came the call again, and this time Rago knew that it was Long-head calling.

"I'm coming, I'm coming," shouted Rago as he ran on as fast as he could.

It was not very easy running, for the trees were very thick in this part of the forest.

As he neared the spot from which the sound had come, he heard a fierce growl.

Growl after growl he heard. " 'Tis a wolf, 'tis a wolf," he thought.

"Where is your torch, Long-head?" panted Rago, as he came up out of breath.

He saw Long-head standing against the tree, and the wolf ready to spring upon him.

Long-head was terribly frightened, for he could not defend himself against the wolf.

His torch was out, and he had lost his club. He didn't dare attempt to climb the tree for fear the wolf would seize him.

Rago came up cautiously from behind. With one bound he waved his torch before the eyes of the wolf.

The fire terrified the wolf and he made one leap for the thicket.

Then Long-head sank to the ground. He was weak with fright.

"He almost had me, that time," said Long-head.

"He was upon me before I knew it. My torch had gone out and I was waiting for you, when the wolf sprang toward me.



"He must have come from the thicket, because I didn't see him until he was upon me."

"That certainly was a narrow escape," said Rago.

"I am glad I heard you call.

"We must stay together now; my torch will protect both of us."

"Let us find something to eat," said Long-head.

So they walked on through the forest. They found nuts and roots and fruits.

"Look out," said Long-head, pointing to an opening in the hill-side.

"That is the home of the cave bear. Don't go too near."

"The cave bears are asleep, aren't they?" asked Rago.

"Yes, but they may wake up," answered Long-head.



"I shouldn't care to be attacked by a cave bear," said Long-head. "They certainly are fierce creatures."

"What a fine patch of blueberries!" said Rago.

"Goni and baby sister would like some of these berries, I know. I wish I might carry some to them."

"I will show you how to make a basket," said Long-head.

"Let us find some rushes."

"There is a marshy place," said Long-head, pointing to the river.

"We can find some rushes there."

So the boys gathered the rushes and sat down upon the ground to make the basket.

Long-head wove the rushes together for the bottom of the basket.

When he had tied the ends together at the top, he wove around the sides, until the basket was



deep enough. Then he fastened the rushes tightly, so that the basket would be strong enough to hold the berries.

"What a fine basket," said Rago. "I have never seen a rush basket before.

"Now let me try to make one." Then Rago wove a basket like the one which Long-head had made.

"Mother will be pleased to see my basket," said Rago.

"Now for the blueberry patch. We can fill our baskets."

The two boys picked enough berries to fill their baskets.

"These baskets are very strong," said Rago.

"Yes," said Long-head. "Oak leaves make strong baskets, also."

After they had filled their bas-

kets the boys wandered about for a while.

They watched the cattle going



toward the stream for their evening's drink.

"Let us follow them," said Long-head.

They enjoyed seeing the cattle wade knee-deep into the stream and drink of the clear, cool water.

Both Rago and Long-head dipped their hands into the water. They filled them and drank.

They were thirsty, for they had had no water all day.

“ ’Tis growing late,” said Long-head. “See, the sun is setting.

“The men will be coming back to the fire. Let us go back also.

“We shall have to tell them about the fierce wolf.”

“Will they play it?” asked Rago.

“Yes, indeed,” answered Long-head.

CHAPTER X

THE RETURN

When Rago and Long-head reached the fire, the men had already returned.

They were sitting on the ground about the fire.

Rago ran up to Goni, saying, "Here are some fine blueberries, Goni. I thought you would like them."

"Where did you get the basket, Rago?" asked Goni.

"I made it from rushes," said

Rago. "Long-head showed me how to make it.

"Some day I will show you how to make a basket just like this one.

"Where is baby sister?" asked Rago.

"She is in there," said Goni, pointing to the shelter.

"The wind is so cold that the children are in there."

Rago walked over toward Long-head. He was talking to the men in a very excited way.

Rago knew he was telling them of his narrow escape from the wolf.

The men were listening and asking questions.

"You must be more careful in the future, Long-head," they said.

"You are a brave boy, Rago,"



said Strong-arm. "We are glad you have come to live with us."

This pleased Rago very much.

"Let us play it," said the men.

So they pretended that one man was the fierce wolf, and another played that he was Rago.

Then the man who played that he was Rago rushed upon the wolf, waving his torch in his eyes.

The Tree-dwellers were very much interested.

“Now let us play it,” said one of the older boys.

So the boys had their hunting dance. They were glad to play what the men had played.

After the hunting dance the men told about the animals which they had seen that day.

They pretended that they were

animals and showed just how the animals acted.

Strong-arm held up the skin of a gopher which he had killed.

He told how the gophers lived among the tall grass, and how quick one had to be to catch them.

Strong-arm showed the other Tree-dwellers how he had caught this gopher.

Another man told how he had chased a cave bear back to its den with his torch. He showed just how he had done this.

"Indeed, the fire is our friend," he said, "for I could not have frightened the cave bear without a torch."

Rago listened while the man talked. He was anxious to learn, so he could be brave.

One by one the men became drowsy and stretched themselves on the ground near the fire.

"Where will you and Goni sleep tonight?" asked Rago of his mother.

"You need not be afraid to sleep on the ground. The fire will protect you."

"We shall sleep on the ground," answered his mother. "Goni is not afraid now."

"Yes," said Goni. "I shall sleep on the ground."

One of the women took her

place by the fire. She would watch all night while the others slept.

Soon all was very quiet. The Tree-dwellers were fast asleep.



Only the sounds of the wild beasts could be heard as they hunted their prey.

The Tree-dwellers were safe, because the fire would protect them.

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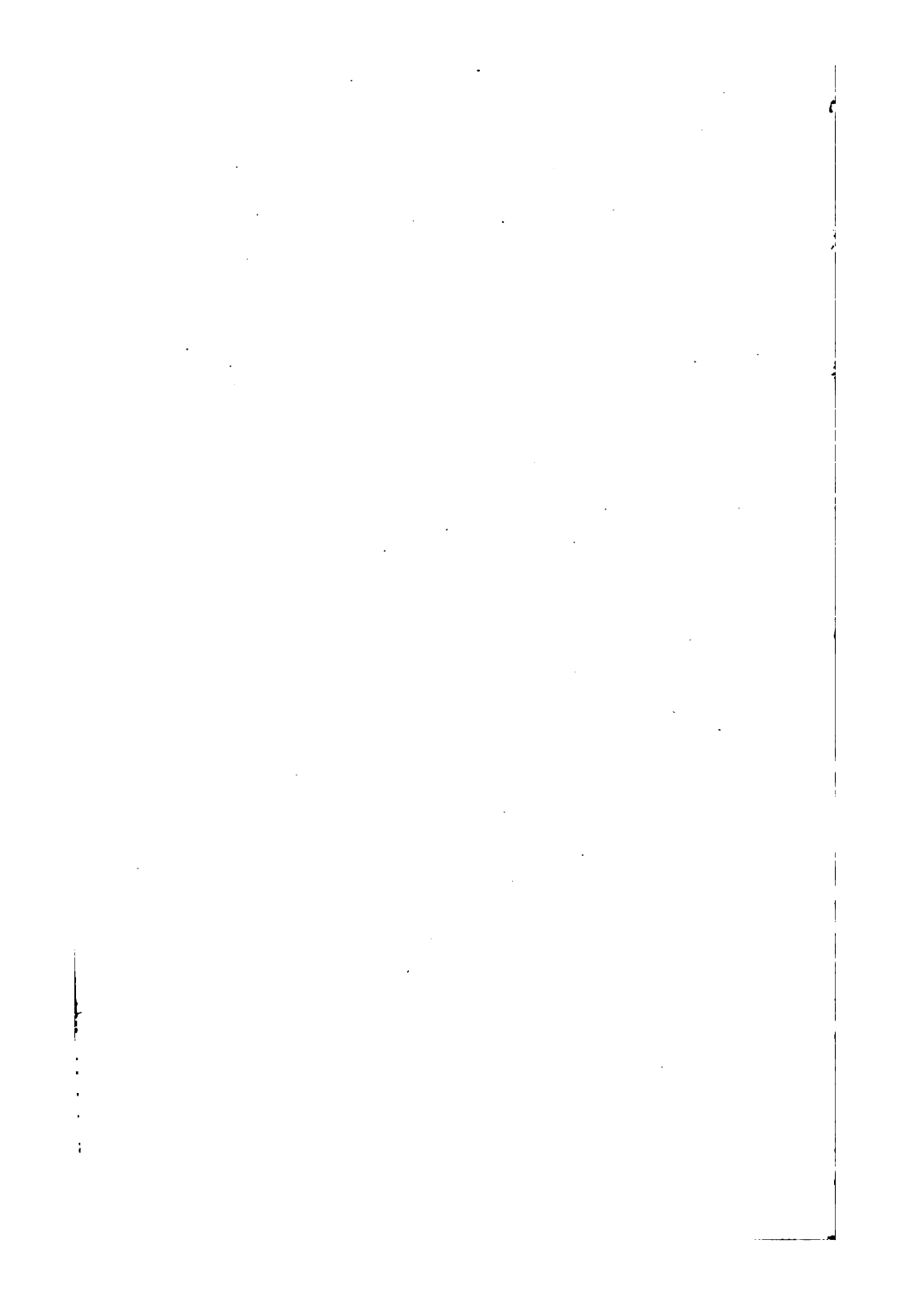
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